

Commandment 10 ... Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife!

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The Guidance through the 'Children's Kingdom' takes place by the Apostle of Love, John.

Chapter 93

1. We are in it and see on the tablet written in clear font: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife!"
2. It hardly needs to be mentioned that this commandment here in the pure realm of the spirit, and especially in the realm of children, surely sounds a bit strange to every thinker. For the moment, these children do not know in the least what a married woman is, for instance, and secondly marriage between the sexes is absolutely not the norm or the way at all, especially in the realm of the children. In the kingdom of spirits this commandment appears to have, according to this consideration, no application.
3. But it will be said: Why would the Lord not have given one out of ten commandments which corresponds only to earthly conditions? For on earth, the connection between man and woman is customary and is therefore an old-established relationship based on the Divine order, which without a commandment, cannot remain in the Divine order. So one can assume here that among the ten commandments, the Lord has given one merely for the maintenance of the order of an external, earthly relationship, so that by maintaining this order, a spiritual, inner, superior order is not disturbed.
4. Well, if that is so, then I say: this commandment is then nothing but a highly superfluous repetition of the sixth commandment, which in any case is quite the same. For even here, in its complete course, everything is represented as forbidden, which has only some relation to fornication, whoring, and adultery, both in the physical, and especially in the spiritual sense.
5. If we weigh this a little against each other, it follows that this commandment is not good for heaven, and that it is a superfluous addition to the sixth commandment.
6. But I already see someone saying: Ha! Dear friend, you are mistaken. This commandment, forbidding the very thing that is forbidden in and of itself, which is prohibited in the sixth commandment, is nevertheless quite peculiar to itself and higher and deeper than the sixth commandment. In the sixth commandment, evidently, only the real gross act is forbidden, but in this tenth, the desire, and the desire as the all-time root-cause for action. For one often sees that especially young husbands usually have beautiful young wives. How easy it is for another man to forget his wife, who may not be beautiful, and to gape at the beautiful wife of his neighbor, awakening an ever greater urge and an ever greater desire for his neighbor's wife, and commit adultery with her.
7. Well, I say, looking at this commandment from this point of view, there are no more than a half-legion of ridiculous and foolish things, by which the Divine nature of such a sublime commandment gets dragged through the filthiest dust and the most stinking sludge of the worldly wits and minds of the people. For the sake of example and explanation, we will, of course, cite some ridiculousness, so that it will be clear to everyone how shallow and external this commandment was understood, explained, and acted upon, for over eight centuries.
8. A man should therefore have no desire for the wife of his neighbor. Here it can be asked: What kind of longing or desire? Because there are a lot of honest and well-tolerated longings and desires that a neighbor can address to the wife of his neighbor. But in the commandment it is absolutely necessary to have "no desire". As a result,

only the two neighbors may be in conversation with each other, but each other's women should always be looked upon with contempt. This is no more and no less than an almost Turkish conception of this Mosaic commandment.

9. Further, if one considers the matter literally and materially, surely one must literally take everything literally, and not take a few words literally and a few words spiritually; which would be just the same as if someone would wear a pair of trousers with one leg black and the other a very subtle transparent white. Or, as if to claim that a tree had to grow such that half of its trunk would appear with bark and the other with no bark. According to this consideration, the tenth commandment prohibits only the desire for the wife of the "neighbor". Who can that be in the literal sense? Nobody else but either the nearest neighbors or close blood relatives. Literally, therefore, one should have no desire only for the wives of these two neighbors; the wives of distant inhabitants of a district, and especially the wives of foreigners, who are certainly no neighbors, could be demanded without further ado. For such a person will understand without mathematics and geometry that in comparison to the nearest neighbor, one living a few hours away, or even a foreigner, cannot be reckoned for a neighbor or a close relative. See, that too is Turkish, because they hold this commandment only towards Turks, towards foreign nations, they have no law. - Let's proceed.

10. I ask: is the wife of my neighbor exempt from this attitude of the Divine law? For the law only states that a man should have no desire for the wife of his neighbor. But there is no syllable of the commandment that a randy woman should have no desire for her nearest neighbor. In this way, the women is evidently given a privilege to seduce the men they see without hesitation. And who will forbid them to do such a thing, since there is no commandment from the Lord in this case? That, too, is from Turkish philosophy; for the Turks know from the literal sense of the Bible that the women are free from such laws. Therefore, they lock them up so they cannot go outside and make other men lust after them. If a Turk permits a walkabout to one of his wives, she must make her appearance so unflattering, that she would even inspire respect in a bear. She is only allowed to show her charm in front of her husband. Who can raise an objection against it, as if such could not be recognized from the literal sense of this commandment? Obviously, this ridiculousness has its undeniable cause in the commandment itself. But let's go on.

11. Cannot the nearest neighbors have grown-up daughters or other pretty maids? According to the tenth commandment, is it lawful or not to have desire for the neighbor's daughters or other girls, even as a husband? Apparently, such is permitted, for in the sixth commandment, there is no talk of desire, but only of the act. But the tenth commandment only forbids the desire for the wife, so the desire for the daughters and any other pretty girls of the neighbor is permitted without argument. - Look; Here again we have a Turkish interpretation of the law. But in order to make the matter clear as daylight we want to cite a few such ridiculous things.

Chapter 94 - Who is the 'you' in the tenth commandment?

1. The law says: "Thou shalt not desire thy neighbor's wife." - Is it not possible to ask: Who is actually "you"? Is he a married man, a widower, an unmarried young man, a youth, or is it also a woman to whom one can also say: Thou shalt not do this or that? It will be said here that this is primarily intended for the male sex, regardless of whether single or married, and that women may incidentally also be included and should not have the right to entice and desire other men, all of that is self-evident.

2. But I say however: If men are even able to determine their statutes, and in their very statutes they make fine and clever dispositions for every possible case, then one cannot blame the Lord as if He had given inconclusive laws out of ignorance, or, like a cunning lawyer, He would have put his laws on paper as such that people would inevitably have to sin one way or the other.

3. I think that to come to such a conclusion at the closer consideration of this seemingly indefinite law, would be a bit gross. It is therefore much more feasible to conclude that this law, like all others, is a most definite one. It has been so distorted and misinterpreted over time, and especially in the period of the hierarchy that has arisen, that by now, no man knows the actual, true meaning of this law. And all that happened because of sheer greed. In the true sense of the word, this law would never have given a penny to the priesthood, but in its covert sense, it

gave rise to all sorts of taxed mediations, dispensing, and divorces; and of course in the earlier days far more than now. For then it was the case that two or more neighbors could not protect themselves against the transgression of this law. How come?

4. Of course, they had to conscientiously confess several times a year, out of great fear of hell. Then they were diligently examined on this point, and even in the case of if some neighbour would give a beautiful young woman at the side of a neighbour even a thought, a glance, or even a conversation, it was explained to be an adulterous sin against this commandment, which was usually accompanied with a sacrificial penalty. If the approach was a little closer, condemnation was complete, and the one who had sunk down to Hell on the pair of balances of St. Michael had to throw very important sacrifices into the other empty scale, so that it would tip over again and pull the poor condemned sinner fortunately out of hell again. The priests who held the power of God are not among those who demand much, but they rather want everything in earnest!

5. In this way many very wealthy knights and counts once had to bite the bullet and, on top of that, as a remission from hell, bequeath their goods to the church. Their unfortunate wives were taken into a convent as atonement for the punishment of their unfaithful husbands. Also the possible children both male and female were then usually divided into such monasteries, where one must possess no earthly riches.

6. I think that this should be enough to see all the really nasty things that came out of the distortion of this law. The indeterminate "you" of the law was the primary source of dispensing, which usually incorporated the most. If someone had made a great sacrifice, you could modify the "you", so that the sinner at least would not go to hell. On the contrary, however, this "you" could also be so damnably determined, by the presumed power of 'binding and loosing', that only very significant sacrifices could help the sinner in salvation from hell.

7. We have now seen to what aberrations the indefinite "you" gave opportunity. But let us not content ourselves with this, but consider some of these ridiculous interpretations, so that it becomes all the clearer to everyone how necessary the acquaintance with the pure meaning of the law is, without which one can never become free, but must remain slavishly under the curse of the law! - And so we proceed!

Chapter 95 - Examples of wrong views of the tenth commandment

1. As the law says, we know that it prohibits a desire or longing. But now it comes to mind: some man is impoverished while his neighbor is a rich man. The wife of the neighbor, as the neighbor of our poor man, has, as he knows, a compassionate and benevolent heart. Our poor man evidently gets a longing for the benevolent wife of his neighbor, and desires to silence his hunger. Question, did he sin or not? He obviously had a desire and longing for the wife of his neighbor. But since it says: Thou shalt have no desire for the wife of thy neighbor, who can justifiably declare this reasonable desire of the poor as sinful? For under "no desire, no longing," surely every desire and every longing must be forbidden, since in the word "none" there allows no exception whatsoever. So, therefore, a desire of whatever kind must be forbidden.

2. Does this not make it seem as if the Lord thereby wished to divert the female sex from charity, according to which, then, every good deed that a housewife gives to a poor man, is to be regarded as a sin which completely runs counter to the Divine command?

3. But is it possible to think of such an absurd command coming from the supreme love of the Lord? It could be said here, of course, that the commandment is limited only to carnal, sensual desire. But I say: It is good, so if it should be thus, then just allow me to make some remarks. If these remarks kill the "should be thus", then every one of us must be content to take another course in determining this commandment. And so you hear the remarks.

4. The commandment should therefore only prohibit a sensual carnal desire. Good, I say, but ask: Is there a certain woman in the command, or are all the women included in the commandment, or are there certain natural exceptions?

5. Suppose several neighbors have old, no longer attractive women. We can be assured that these neighbors no longer have a carnal desire for both their wives. Accordingly, only the young women should be understood, and only if they are beautiful and charming. Surely even men who are old and full of days, will not be much tortured by carnal sensual desires towards whatever women of their neighbors.

6. From this, however, we see that this law is valid only under certain conditions. So the law has gaps and thus has no general validity. For where nature already makes exceptions and a law does not even have the full natural validity, how should it extend to the spiritual? If you cannot understand this, just break off a tree and see if it will then grow and bear fruit.

7. But a Divine law must surely be so constituted that its blissful validity is "lawful" for all eternity. If, however, in the course of the short earthly existence, it is naturally pushed beyond the applicable limits, and thus already ceases to be active in the natural state of man, what shall it then be for eternity? Is not every law of God founded in His infinite love? But what is it afterwards, when such a law is made invalid? Is this something different from what one might claim that Divine love, under certain circumstances, also ceases to be valid for man?

8. But this is also the basis of the sad faith of your pagan-Christian side, according to which the love of God lasts only as long as man lives in this world. Once he has died in his body and merely exists there in soul and spirit, the immutable, terribly strict, punitive angry righteousness of God takes immediate effect, in which there is no talk of everlasting love and mercy.

9. If man, through his way of life, deserves heaven, he will not go to heaven because of the Divine love, but only according to the Divine justice, of course, through his own good and pleasing mercy. But if man has not lived thus, eternal damnation is present immediately, from which salvation is never to be expected. In other words, it says as much as that there is some stupid Father who has set up a law in His household against His children, which means:

10. I give complete freedom to all my children from birth until their seventh year. During this time you should enjoy all my love without distinction. After the seventh year, however, I withdraw my love from all the children and from then on I either want to judge you or make you happy. Those who, as minor children, have kept my heavy laws, from the seventh year onwards shall enjoy their highest pleasure. But those who, in the course of the seven years, have not completely improved one atom according to my great law, from now on are to be forever cursed and rejected from my, the father's, house. - Say, what would you say to such a cruel donkey of a father? Would not that be more than the most shameful tyranny of all tyrants?

11. But if you were to find such a man indescribably foolish, bad, and evil, how horribly nonsensical must those men be who can ascribe even far worse things to God, who is the Supreme Love and Wisdom Himself!

12. What did the Lord do on the cross as the sole Divine Wisdom, since, by manner of speech, He was as if separated from the eternal Love? He, as Wisdom, and as such the foundation of all righteousness, turned Himself to the Father or the eternal Love, not calling for just vengeance, but He implores Love to forgive all these abusers, including the high priests and Pharisees their deeds, for they did not know what they were doing!

13. So this is what Divine justice does for itself. Should the infinite Divine Love then begin to condemn where the Divine justice implores the still infinitely more merciful Love for mercy?

14. If one does not accept that the Lord was really serious in His request, and says that He has only done so as an example, does one not then make of the Lord a hypocrite, by only seemingly making Him ask for forgiveness on the cross, but secretly one sees in Him the irrepressible revenge, according to which He has long condemned all these evildoers to the most intense hellish fire?

15. O world! O people! O most terrible nonsense that could ever be conceived in all infinity and eternity! Is it possible to think of something more shameful than to make the Lord on the cross a liar, a false preacher, a traitor, and thus a universal con artist, for the false, though temporally lucrative, justification of hell? From whose mouth except from that of the arch-satan can such a doctrine and words come?

16. I think it is enough here, too, to bring you to the realization of what abominations may come from a very wrong interpretation and exegesis of a Divine law. That it is all the same with you in the world, you can already grasp with your own hands. But why it is so, for what reason, you did not know and could not know; for this law's knot was too confused, and no one could ever fully loosen this knot.

17. Therefore, the Lord had mercy on you, and let you in the sun, since it is certainly bright enough to announce to you the true solution to this knot, so that you may have insight into the general cause of all evil and darkness.

18. It will of course be said: Yes, how can so much evil depend on the misunderstanding of the Ten Commandments of Moses?

19. I think: Because these ten commandments are given by God and carry in themselves the whole infinite order of God Himself.

20. Therefore, whoever would step out of the Divine order at one point or another, no longer remains in the Divine because it is equal to a straight path. If somebody deviates from this path, can he say: I have deviated only a quarter, fifth, seventh or tenth of the way? Certainly not. For as he leaves the path in the least, he has already departed from the whole way. If he does not wish to return, it will certainly be possible to assert that the single point on the way, where the wanderer deviated from it, had removed the wanderer from the whole way.

21. And so it is with every single part of the Divine law. It will not be easy to find someone who would have terribly sinned against every law, as this is almost impossible. But it is enough if someone would sin at a point and then insist on it. He thus departs from the whole law, and if he does not want it and the Lord does not want to help him, he would never return to the way of the law or the Divine order. And so you may also be assured that most of the evils of the world unfortunately probably originate from selfish and malicious misunderstanding, or rather from the malicious distortion of the meaning of these last two Divine commandments.

22. But we have now sufficiently revealed the ridiculousness and false interpretations of this commandment; Therefore, let us proceed to the correct meaning of this law, in the light of which you will all see these foolish things incomparably brighter highlighted.

Chapter 96 - Reason for concealment of the actual meaning of the tenth commandment

1. Here are some who have read the preceding saying: We are seriously curious about what this commandment has for a proper permanent purpose, since every sense we have previously attached to this commandment has irrevocably been drawn into the absurdly ridiculous as it was presented. We seriously would like to know who is the "you", and also, the wife? For out of this commandment, nothing can be established with certainty. "You" may well be anyone, but whether a woman can be understood by that is still uncertain. At best, the neighbor could be more closely defined, especially if one takes that word in a broader sense, whereby then anyone who needs our help is our neighbor. But the wife is causing the greatest dilemma; because one does not know if a married woman or a single person of the female gender is to be understood. Of course, it is written as singular and not plural; but that does not make the matter any more specific. For if one accepts polygamy in any part of the world, then obviously the simple number would have a new catch. For all this, we are all the more curious about the true meaning of this commandment, in that the literal sense is everywhere wholly inconsistent.

2. And I say: So it is certain and clear that with the assumption of the pure external sense of the letter, only the greatest nonsense can be represented, but never any established truth.

3. It will of course be said here: Yes, why did the Lord not give the law immediately so that it would not be obscure for everyone, but appear quite open in the sense that it actually exists and how it can be observed in that very sense?

4. This objection, at first sounds rather wise; but considered in the light, it is so stupid that one cannot easily imagine something more stupid. But for all to easily see the extraordinary absurdity of this objection, as if one

would stand only a few miles away from the sun, and then suddenly see it up close - or like one who cannot see the forest for the trees, so I will make some natural, very brief observations for this occasion.

5. Let us suppose that a so-called naturalist and botanist would like to ask for the convenience of his investigation: Why did not the creative power of the highest Creator create the trees and plants in such a way that the inner core is outside and the bark inside? It would be easy to observe the rising of the juice into the branches and twigs and their reactions and other effects with a microscope? For it cannot have been the intention of the Creator to put the thinking man on earth in such a position that he should never penetrate into the mystery of the miraculous effects of nature. - What do you say to this desire? Is it not extremely stupid?

6. Suppose, however, that the Lord could be bribed by such a request and thus turn the trees and the plants inside out - will not other naturalists come in immediately and say: What good is the consideration of the external core, if we cannot discover the wonderful formation of the inner bark? What follows from this? The Lord would have to submit Himself again now and fix the bark and the core on the outside of the tree in an incomprehensible way. Suppose, however, that the Lord had really done so and the interior of the tree consists now only of wood. Will not another naturalist at once announce a new need and say: Because the bark on the one side and the core on the other, all the wonderful formation of the wood is now concealed. Could not a tree be designed so that everything, core, wood and bark were exposed or at least be as transparent as the air?

7. Whether one can make a tree with all of its countless many necessary organs as transparent as air or at least as pure as water is what opticians and mathematicians should decide. By the way, whether any fruit will grow on perfectly airy trees, may be experienced in the regions of the North Pole or South Pole. For there are sometimes such phenomena that, as in the winter, crystalline ice-trees burst open on the glass windows in the way you do in the winter, but there, in the air. Whether figs and dates appear on these trees, has not yet been determined.

8. With regard to the trees, where everything, core, wood, and bark, should be exposed, you can be perfectly assured that it would be just as easy to make a square ball as such a tree. I think that by this consideration, the stupidity of the above objection should be as clear as the sun before the eyes. But to make the matter, as usual, really excessive, let's add a few more considerations.

9. Let us suppose that when a doctor who has to study a great deal, and has already swallowed a whole heavy cart full of erudition like a polyp, is called to a dreadfully ill patient, he is often at the sickbed, like a pair of newly-tethered oxen on a steep mountain. The doctor is asked by the bystanders: How is the patient, what is wrong with him? Can him be helped?

10. At these questions the doctor makes a scholarly, but still very questionable and embarrassed face and says: My dears! Nothing can yet be determined; I must first test the illness with some medicine. If there are any reactions, I'll know what to think of it. But if no reactions occur here, then you must realize for yourself that someone like us simply cannot look into our bodies to find out the location of the disease and its condition.

11. But somebody says somewhat laconically: Mister Doctor, our Lord God would have done better if He had created man like the carpenter does a cabinet that you can unlock and see what is inside. Or the Creator should have placed the more delicate parts, which can be so difficult to reach by means of the fingers, ears, eyes, and nose on the outside, so that this can be easily fixed with a plaster, an ointment, or with a bandage. But it would be best if He had either created man transparent as the water or He should not have made him with such life-endangering parts, but should have made him overall more like a stone.

12. The doctor wrinkles his nose a little, but still speaks: Yes, my dear friend, that would be good and better, but it simply is not the way you just wished it to be. So we have to be content with it, if we are only able to depend on experience regarding the inner state of health and illness of a person by means of experience. For if man were also to open like a box, it would be much more perilous for every human being than it is, because only one little awkward grasp on the inside could instantly take a life. And if one were also able to inspect the entrails through such an opening, that would be of little use. The intestines and their fine organs would have to remain closed since all vital juices and every life activity would cease at the opening of the organ. But as far as the external positioning of the internal parts of the body is concerned, my dear, that would give the human form a most

unattractive sight. And if the human being were completely transparent, each would be frightened of the other, for he would simultaneously see the skin, the muscles, the vessels, the nerves, and finally the bones. That such a sight would not be inviting, you can imagine for yourself.

13. I think that in this consideration, the foolishness of the above objection will be more obvious to you.

14. But there is someone else who speaks: It is, of course, absurd to think of natural, material things, that their internal things should at the same time make up their appearance. But the word in itself is neither a tree, nor an animal, nor a human, but it is in and of itself spiritual, in that it bears nothing material in itself. Why should it be like a tree or humans, or any incomprehensible inner meaning? Or how should this be possible considering the already extraordinary simplicity and flatness of the word?

15. Well, I say, let's take the word "father". What does it mean? Is the word already the father himself, or does the word signify a truly essential father, of whom this word is merely an external feature? It will be said: Obviously here the word is not the father himself, but only an external designation of it. Well, but then I ask: What then must one understand under the word, so that one recognizes this word as an external, correctly identifying type? Answer: The word must be a man of an appropriate age, married, having living children with his wife, and then truly caring for them physically and spiritually.

16. Who can deny in the least that this rather stretched and exceedingly essential meaning must be contained in the simple word "father," without which this word would not be a word?

17. But even if in external relations every simple word must permit a more inward explanation and dissection, how much more must each external word have an internal spiritual sense, for everything which is signified by external words, has in itself an inward spiritual power and activity. A father certainly has a soul and spirit. Will the word properly describe the term "father" if it excludes the soul and the spirit? Certainly not, for the essential Father consists of body, soul and spirit, that is to say, something external, internal and deeply internal. If, then, the essential Father is thus alive, then must not the word indicating the father, just as perfectly reflect as in a mirror in the Word, the Father in its essence?

18. I think that a necessary inner sense of the word cannot be represented more completely and clearly. From this, however, it can also be seen that the Lord, if He manifests His will in the world, cannot announce it to external people according to His eternal Divine order, except only through external, pictorial representations, which then are obviously supported by an internal one and an innermost sense. Through this, then, the whole man is supplied with Divine love from his inward to his utmost.

19. But now that we have more than demonstrated the necessity and the certainty of such an institution, it will be an easy matter to find the inner, true meaning of our law almost by itself; and as it is portrayed by me, at least to recognize the incontrovertible, the only true and universal. - And so we go straight to such a presentation!

Chapter 97 - The inner, self-evident meaning of the tenth commandment

1. The law therefore reads, as we already know it by heart: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," or: Thou shalt have no desire for thy neighbor's wife, which is one and the same thing. - Who is "the woman" and who is the "neighbor"?

2. The woman is the love of every man, and the neighbor is every man with whom I come into contact, who is possibly in need of my help. If we know that, we basically know everything.

3. What does the commandment therefore say? Nothing other than: Every human being should not demand the love of his neighbor for his own good; for self-love is in and of itself nothing else than to attract the love of the other for one's own enjoyment, but not having one spark of love to give back to him.

4. This is then the law in its spiritual sense. But one says:

5. Here it is evidently reproduced in the sense of the letter, which one might have pronounced in the beginning just as well as now, whereby many aberrations would have been prevented. - But I say: That's correct, though. If one splits a tree in the middle, the core also comes out, and one can look at it just as easily as you could the bark before.
6. The Lord, however, has diligently veiled the inner sense in an outer, natural picture, so that this sacred, inward, living sense should not be attacked and destroyed by any malevolent man, whereby then all the heavens and worlds could be brought to the greatest harm. For this reason, the Lord also said: "Before the great and mighty wise men of the world, it shall remain hidden, and be revealed only to the small, the weak, and the underaged.
7. This principle is already prevalent in the things of nature. Suppose that the Lord created the trees so that their core and their main organs of life would be at the outside of the trunk? Say you yourselves, how many dangers would a tree be exposed to, every second?
8. You know, if you deliberately or wantonly pierce a tree's inner core, the tree is done for. If any evil worm gnaws through the main trunk root, which is in close contact with the core of the tree, the tree dies. Who is not familiar with the malicious so-called "bark beetle"? What does he do to the trees? He gnaws first on the wood and eats here and there into the main organs of the tree and the tree dies. If, in this already well-guarded manner, the tree is still exposed to so many dangers of life, to what extent would he be exposed if his essential life-organs would be at the outside of the trunk?
9. See, it is just the same and unspeakably worse with the word of the Lord. If the inner meaning would be exposed at the outset, then there would have been already for a long time no religion among men. They would have gnawed and clawed at this inner, holy meaning of their lives as if on the outer bark of the tree of life. The inner holy city of God would have been a long time ago so thoroughly destroyed that no stone would have remained on the other, as they did with the old Jerusalem, and as they did it with the outer words, which only exist in the literal sense.
10. For the word of God in its outward, literal sense as you have it in the Holy Scriptures before you, is so very much different from the original text, as today's most wretched city of Jerusalem is different from the ancient cosmopolitan city of Jerusalem.
11. All this displacement and fragmentation, and also abbreviation only in the external sense of the letter, is not detrimental to the inner sense, because the Lord, through His wise providence, has created His order since eternity as such, that one and the same spiritual truth would stay preserved undamaged among a great variety of external images.
12. But the case would be quite different if the Lord had at once given the naked inner spiritual truth without a protective outer covering. They would have destroyed this holy, living truth and destroyed it at their discretion, and all life would have been done for.
13. But because the inner sense is so obscured that the world can never possibly find it, life remains secure, even though its outer garment is torn into pieces. And so, of course, the inner sense of the word sounds when it is revealed, as if it were equal to the external sense of the word, and can also be expressed by articulated sounds or words. But that does not confuse the issue in the least. For this reason, the inner, living, spiritual sense nevertheless remains, and is recognizable in that it embraces the whole Divine order, while the picture containing it, expresses only a special relationship which, as we have seen, can never have one general meaning.
14. But just as the commandment just described in the picture, is but an external envelope, and how the inner sense now announced to you is a truly inner, spiritual, and living one, I would like to clearly explain to you with a small reflection.
15. The outer pictorial commandment is known; inwardly it says: Have no desire for the love of your brother or sister!

16. Why is this content and vital commandment here wrapped in the image of the not to be desired woman?

17. On this occasion, I only call your attention to a saying of the Lord Himself, in which He expresses Himself about the love of man for a woman, since He speaks: "So a son will leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife".

18. What does the Lord mean by this? Nothing else than man's most powerful love in this world is that for his wife. For what does man in his order love more in the world than his dear, good, honest wife? In the woman, therefore, the whole love of the man is contained, just as, conversely, the woman in her order certainly loves nothing more powerfully than the man who corresponds to her heart.

19. Thus, in this commandment, under the image of the woman, the whole love of the man or of man in general is set, because the woman is in earnest nothing but an outer, tender covering of the love of the man.

20. Who can escape the explanation that with the picture, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife", as much is said as: you shall not demand to your own advantage the love of your neighbor, and all other loves, because the world as wife also includes the whole love of man in itself.

21. If you would consider it with more detail, you will even grasp it with your hands, that all the outer, known vagueness of the external pictorial law are nothing but pure inner general determinations. How, we shall soon see.

22. See, the "you" is indefinite. Why? Because in the internal sense, "everyone" is understood, regardless of male or female gender. Likewise, the woman is indefinite, for it is not said whether an old or a young, whether one or more, whether a girl or a widow. Why then indefinite? Because the love of man is only one, and is neither an old nor a young woman, nor a widow, nor a single girl, but she, as love, is singular in each man. For this, the neighbor should have no desire, because it is each person's own life. Anyone who has an arrogant, envious, or avaricious desire for this love, is a murderer of his neighbor, seeking to seize his life or love to his advantage. So the neighbor is indefinite too. Why? Because in the spiritual sense, "everyone" is understood, without distinction of gender.

23. I think it should be quite clear to you that the inner sense that I have shown you is the only right one, for it encompasses everything.

24. There may be some who, boasting out of their lunar quarter-light, may object and say, If this is the case, then it is not a sin for anyone to tempt or long after their neighbor's wife or daughter. I say: Oh, my dear friend! With this assumption you have strongly lost your way into the blue. With the fact that you should not desire the love of your neighbor, and indeed all his love, is not understood "all that he carries as a life duty" in his heart. Behold, therefore, not only the wife and the daughters of your neighbor in the commandment are deprived of your desire, but everything that is embraced by your brother's love.

25. For this reason, the two last commandments were initially given as one commandment. They are only distinguished by the fact that in the ninth commandment, the love of the neighbor is more singularly to be respected, but in the tenth commandment the very same is given in the most inward sense, representing the observation of respect in general terms.

26. That the desire for the wife and the daughters of the neighbor is forbidden, surely every man can reach this realization with his hands. It is the same than if you give someone a whole ox, you also give its extremities - the tail, horns, ears, feet and so on. Or if the Lord would give a world to someone, then he will give him everything that is on the same and not say: Only the inside of the world is yours, but the surface is Mine.

27. I think the matter cannot be made more clear to the understanding of man. We have now fully acquainted ourselves with the inner, true meaning of this commandment, as it is eternally valid in all the heavens and conditions the bliss of all angels, and we have met every possible objection. So we're done with that and want to go straight to the eleventh illuminated hall in front of us. There we shall find everything that has been said so far in the clearest light, summarised and confirmed in one point. - So we enter!